(b) if so, the reasons for which he has announced this stand from the rampart of Red Fort in his Independence Day speech this year; and

(c) what is the attitude of Government of India today on this issue ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI) : (a) to (c) It is a fact that Pakistan continues to be in unauthorised occupation of a part of Jammu & Kashmir. While referring to frequent statements by Pak leaders about Kashmir being the unfinished task, the Prime Minister in his Independence Day address of 1994 had stated that there is only one unfinished task and that is the restoration of Pak occupied part of Kashmir to India. The effort of the Govt. of India is to resolve this problem, and other outstanding issues of differences with Pakistan, by peaceful bilateral dialogue in the spirit of Shimla Agreement of 1972, despite continued efforts of Pakistan to try to internationalise the issue relating to Jammu & Kashmir.

Bomb Blast in Outskirts of Jammu City

2600. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there was a power-ful bomb blast in a private bus that exploded on 29th November, 1994 at the outskirts of Jammu City;

(b) if so, whether eight pilgrims, including a child, bound for Vaishno Devi were killed and 40 others sustained injury;

(c) the steps taken by Government to investigate into the cause of the blast and to see that incidents of this nature do not recur in future; and

(d) what is the compensation amount proposed to be paid by Government to the kith of those affected by the incident ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI) : (a) and (b) No such incident took place on 29-11-1994. However, on 28-11-1994, an explosion took place in a passenger bus going from Jammu to Katra, resulting in the instant death of 8 persons and injuries to 44 others. Two of the injured later succumbed to their injuries.

(c) Efforts are on to trace the culprits behind the bomb blast. Intensified patrolling by the police/security forces, establishment of police check posts on routes/roads coming to Jammu, surprise checks of buses, checking of over-loading, launching of public awareness compaign and apprehension of anti-social elements and suspected trans-border smugglers are some of the steps being taken to avoid recurrence of such incidents.

(d) Ex-gratia relief of Rupees 1 lakh each has been announced by the State Government in respect of persons who were killed, and Rs. 5000/- each to those injured.

Proposal From JKLF Leader on Kashmir Issue

2601. SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that some Members of Parliament have received copies of an appeal made by the self-styled Chairman of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front to the People of India, sent from London, giving proposals regarding solution to the so-called Kashmir problem; and

(b) whether Government have also received similar proposals from the JKLF and if so, what is Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI) : (a) and (b) Government are aware of letters purported to have been written by the self-styled Chairman of the JKLF from Pakistan. It is not considered necessary to react to the same.

Mercenaries Operating in Kashmir

2602. SYED SIBTEY RAZI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether mercenaries of different countries have been operating in Kashmir since the onset of anti-India Militancy in 1990.

(b) if so, the details thereof with names of countries to which these mercenaries belong;